

2007 Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Risk Behaviors of Montana Youth

Who Have Used Methamphetamines

February 2008

Prepared for

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Methamphetamine Use

Methamphetamine is a powerfully addictive stimulant that dramatically affects the central nervous system. It is a white, odorless, bitter-tasting crystalline powder that easily dissolves in water or alcohol.

Methamphetamine is taken orally or intranasally (snorting the powder), by intravenous injection, and by smoking. Users may become addicted quickly, and use it with increasing frequency and in increasing doses. Chronic methamphetamine abusers exhibit symptoms that can include violent behavior, anxiety, confusion, and insomnia. They also can display a number of psychotic features, including paranoia, auditory hallucinations, mood disturbances, and delusions (for example, the sensation of insects creeping on the skin). The paranoia can result in homicidal as well as suicidal thoughts.

This report addresses the question, “Are those youth involved with methamphetamine at risk for other unhealthy behaviors?” Since 1999 the Youth Risk Behavior Survey has been addressing methamphetamine use among 7th and 8th grade and high school students. YRBS data indicate that since 2005 methamphetamine use among high school students has dropped by 39 percent. This is extremely good news; however, during February of 2007, five percent of high school students reported having used methamphetamines at least once in their lifetime.

Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey

The Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) is administered by the Montana Office of Public Instruction every two years to 7th and 8th grade students and to high school students. The purpose of the survey is to help monitor the prevalence of behaviors that not only influence youth health, but also put youth at risk for the most significant health and social problems that can occur during adolescence. While all schools in Montana can participate in the survey on a volunteer basis, approximately 50 high schools are randomly selected to be included with high schools from other states for national data and reports.

The 2007 YRBS was conducted in February of 2007 with 7,977 7th and 8th grade students and 10,368 high school students. This represents approximately 35 percent of all 7th and 8th grade students and 22 percent of all high school students in Montana. Schools administering the survey were provided with detailed written instructions on conducting a random survey in their schools. To encourage accurate responses to sensitive questions, a strict protocol was implemented to protect the privacy and confidentiality of all participating students.

Survey Validity and Limitations

Data used in this report from the 2007 Youth Risk Behavior Survey are not based on a random survey. It would not be valid to generalize the findings from this survey to all 7th and 8th grade and high school students in Montana. It is only valid to attribute the results of this survey to the students who reported their behaviors in response to the items in the questionnaire. In addition, respondents in self-reported surveys may have a tendency to underreport behaviors that are socially undesirable, unhealthy, or illegal (alcohol consumption, drug use, seat belt non-usage, etc.) and overreport behaviors that are socially desirable (amount of exercise, etc.).

Survey Results

For the purposes of this report, youth who are classified as having used methamphetamines responded “1 or more times” to the question “During your life, how many times have you used methamphetamines (also called speed, crystal, crank, or ice)?” Eleven separate risk behaviors associated with sexual behavior, tobacco use, and alcohol and other drug use were investigated for association with the methamphetamine use risk behavior. These risk behaviors are listed in Table 1 and Table 2.

Data from the 2007 YRBS indicate the following results:

- **Montana youth who have used methamphetamines are more likely to have used tobacco products than youth who have not used methamphetamines.**

Montana youth (7th and 8th graders and high school students) who have used methamphetamines are more likely to have tried smoking cigarettes in their lifetime than youth who have not used methamphetamines. Similarly, Montana 7th and 8th graders who have used methamphetamines are more likely (58 percent vs. 8 percent) to have smoked cigarettes on one or more of the 30 days prior to taking the survey than students who have not used methamphetamines. Montana high school youth who have used methamphetamines are more likely (76 percent vs. 20 percent) to have smoked cigarettes on one or more of the 30 days prior to taking the survey.

Montana 7th and 8th graders who have used methamphetamines are more likely (25 percent vs. 2 percent) to have smoked cigarettes on 20 or more of the 30 days prior to taking the survey than students who have not used methamphetamines. Montana high school youth who have used methamphetamines are also more likely (48 percent vs. 7 percent) to have smoked cigarettes on 20 or more of the 30 days prior to taking the survey.

Montana 7th and 8th graders who have used methamphetamines are more likely (39 percent vs. 5 percent) to have used chewing tobacco or snuff on one or more of the 30 days prior to taking the survey than students who have not used methamphetamines. Similarly, Montana high school youth who have used methamphetamines are more likely (47 percent vs. 13 percent) to have used chewing tobacco or snuff on one or more of the 30 days prior to taking the survey.

- **Montana youth who have used methamphetamines are more likely to have used/abused alcohol than youth who have not used methamphetamines.**

Montana 7th and 8th graders who have used methamphetamines are nearly twice as likely (80 percent vs. 44 percent) to have ever had a drink of alcohol (other than a few sips) in their lifetime than students who have not used methamphetamines. Montana high school youth who have used methamphetamines are also more likely (96 percent vs. 77 percent) to have had a drink of alcohol in their lifetime.

Montana 7th and 8th graders who have used methamphetamines are more likely (63 percent vs. 12 percent) to have been involved in binge drinking (5 or more drinks of alcohol in a row) in the 30 days prior to taking the survey than students who have not used methamphetamines. Montana high school youth who have used methamphetamines are about twice as likely (77 percent vs. 31 percent) to have been involved in binge drinking.

- **Montana youth who have used methamphetamines are more likely to have used marijuana in their lifetime than youth who have not used methamphetamines.**

Montana 7th and 8th graders who have used methamphetamines are about five times more likely (68 percent vs. 14 percent) to have used marijuana in their lifetime than students who have not used methamphetamines. Montana high school youth who have used methamphetamines are about three times more likely (93 percent vs. 33 percent) to have used marijuana in their lifetime than high school students who have not used methamphetamines.

- **Montana youth who have used methamphetamines are more likely have sniffed glue or used inhalants during their lifetime than youth who have not used methamphetamines.**

Montana 7th and 8th graders who have used methamphetamines are more likely (62 percent vs. 16 percent) to have had sniffed glue or used inhalants in their lifetime than students who have not used methamphetamines. Montana high school youth who have used methamphetamines are more likely (69 percent vs. 13 percent) to have sniffed glue or used inhalants in their lifetime.

- **Montana youth who have used methamphetamines are more likely to be sexually active than youth who have not used methamphetamines.**

Montana 7th and 8th graders who have used methamphetamines are more likely (65 percent vs. 15 percent) to have had sexual intercourse during their lifetime than students who have not used methamphetamines. Montana high school youth who have used methamphetamines are twice as likely (88 percent vs. 44 percent) to have had sexual intercourse in their lifetime than high school youth who have not used methamphetamines.

Montana 7th and 8th graders who have used methamphetamines are more likely (36 percent vs. 3 percent) to have had sexual intercourse with four or more people during their lifetime than students who have not used methamphetamines. Montana high school youth who have used methamphetamines are more likely (57 percent vs. 12 percent) to have had sexual intercourse with four or more people in their lifetime than high school youth who have not used methamphetamines.

- **Montana youth who have not used methamphetamines are more likely to think of themselves as about the right weight than youth who have used methamphetamines.**

Montana 7th and 8th graders who have not used methamphetamines are more likely (58 percent vs. 37 percent) to think of themselves as about the right weight than students who have used methamphetamines. Montana high school youth who have not used methamphetamines are more likely (58 percent vs. 43 percent) to think of themselves as about the right weight.

- **Montana youth who have not used methamphetamines are more likely to be physically active than youth who have used methamphetamines.**

Montana 7th and 8th graders who have not used methamphetamines are more likely (56 percent vs. 46 percent) to have been physically active for at least 60 minutes on five or more of the seven days prior to taking the survey than students who have used methamphetamines. Montana high school youth who have not used methamphetamines are more likely (47 percent vs. 31 percent) to have been physically active for at least 60 minutes on five or more of the seven days prior to taking the survey.

Clearly, Montana youth who have used methamphetamines also place themselves at higher risk for negative health consequences from other undesirable behaviors than youth who have not used methamphetamines. This association exists in every behavior risk category examined and is indicative of the unhealthy and eventually costly lifestyles of the methamphetamine users.

Table 1
2007 Youth Risk Behavior Survey
Risk Behaviors of Methamphetamine Users vs. Non-Users
Montana 7th and 8th Grade Students

Health Risk Behavior	Methamphetamine Users	Methamphetamine Non-Users
Ever tried cigarette smoking in their lifetime (Q16)	70.4%	25.7%
Smoked on one or more days during the past 30 days (Q18)	58.3%	8.1%
Smoked on 20 or more days during the past 30 days (Q18)	25.7%	1.5%
Used chewing tobacco or snuff during the past 30 days (Q22)	38.7%	5.3%
Ever drank alcohol in their lifetime (Q24)	79.6%	43.6%
Had five or more drinks of alcohol in a row during the past 30 days (Q26)	62.6%	11.5%
Used marijuana in their lifetime (Q27)	67.9%	13.7%
Used inhalants in their lifetime (Q29)	62.2%	15.8%
Ever had sex in their lifetime (Q33)	65.3%	14.5%
Had sex with four or more people in their lifetime (Q35)	36.1%	2.7%
Think of themselves as about the right weight (Q37)	37.3%	57.5%
Physically active for at least 60 minutes/day on 5 or more of the past 7 days (Q44)	45.6%	56.3%

Figure 1
2007 Youth Risk Behavior Survey
Risk Behaviors of Methamphetamine Users vs. Non-Users
Montana 7th and 8th Grade Students

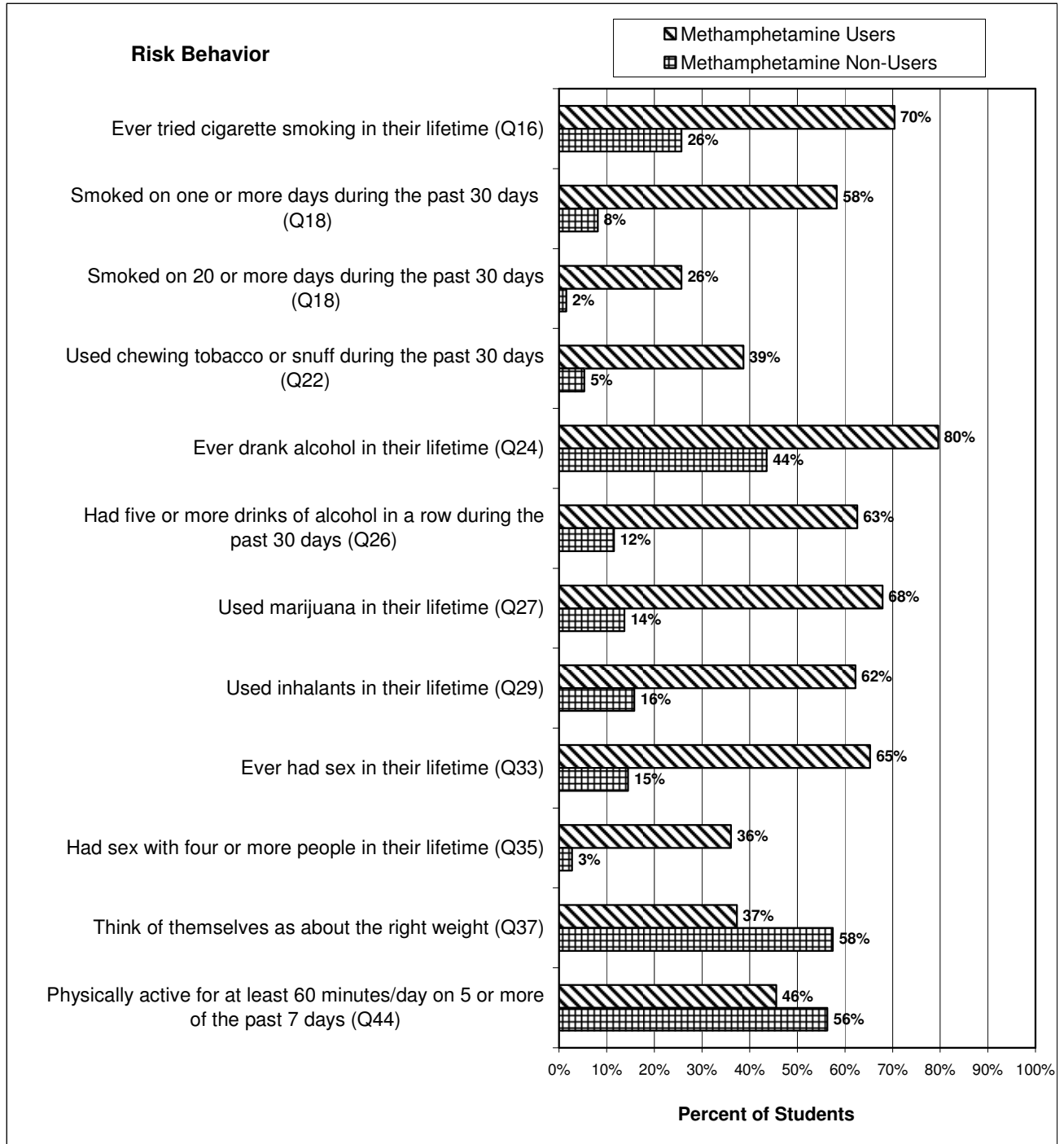


Table 2
2007 Youth Risk Behavior Survey
Risk Behaviors of Methamphetamine Users vs. Non-Users
Montana High School Students

Health Risk Behavior	Methamphetamine Users	Methamphetamine Non-Users
Ever tried cigarette smoking in their lifetime (Q28)	91.4%	50.8%
Smoked on one or more days during the past 30 days (Q30)	76.3%	20.0%
Smoked on 20 or more days during the past 30 days (Q30)	48.1%	6.6%
Used chewing tobacco or snuff during the past 30 days (Q36)	46.8%	13.4%
Ever drank alcohol in their lifetime (Q39)	95.9%	76.8%
Had five or more drinks of alcohol in a row during the past 30 days (Q42)	77.0%	31.1%
Used marijuana in their lifetime (Q45)	92.8%	33.1%
Used inhalants in their lifetime (Q51)	69.2%	13.3%
Ever had sex in their lifetime (Q58)	88.1%	44.4%
Had sex with four or more people in their lifetime (Q60)	56.7%	12.0%
Think of themselves as about the right weight (Q65)	43.0%	57.4%
Physically active for at least 60 minutes/day on 5 or more of the past 7 days (Q80)	31.0%	46.6%

Figure 2
2007 Youth Risk Behavior Survey
Risk Behaviors of Methamphetamine Users vs. Non-Users
Montana High School Students

